

OUR COMMON CHRISTIAN-ISLAMIC HERITAGE

Leila Ibrahim Takla

Alexandria, EGYPT

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FOREWORD

Leila Takla is an indefatigable fighter for human rights and cultural diversity, a dedicated worker for the public good and a voice of experience and wisdom on the many boards and committees that she serves on. She is also a founding Board of Trustees of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the new Library of Alexandria.

I was delighted to hear her speak at a recent event about women and peace, where she delivered a thoughtful and moving appeal to recognize the common Christian–Muslim heritage of tolerance and love. In the land from which both Christianity and Islam entered the continent of Africa, it is essential that both communities not only live together in peace and harmony, but that they should enjoy their interaction and find enrichment in the diversity. Indeed, Christians and Muslims have together written the history of Egypt over the last fifteen centuries or so, and have forged the contemporary Egyptian persona.

Today, when some would bare the fangs of intolerance under the guise of religious passion or pride, it is important to remind ourselves of our common roots and mutual

heritage. Thus, Leila Takla's eloquent appeal to recognize the common ground that we share in the two traditions is both accurate and timely. Having heard her forceful plea, I asked her to let the Bibliotheca Alexandrina publish it for wider dissemination. She agreed and here it is. All who read it will agree that there is so much more that unites us than whatever can divide us. So let us each do our part, working with others to promote a safe and secure society, where the culture of peace reigns supreme.

Ismail Serageldin
Librarian of Alexandria
Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Alexandria, March 2006

Dear Reader,

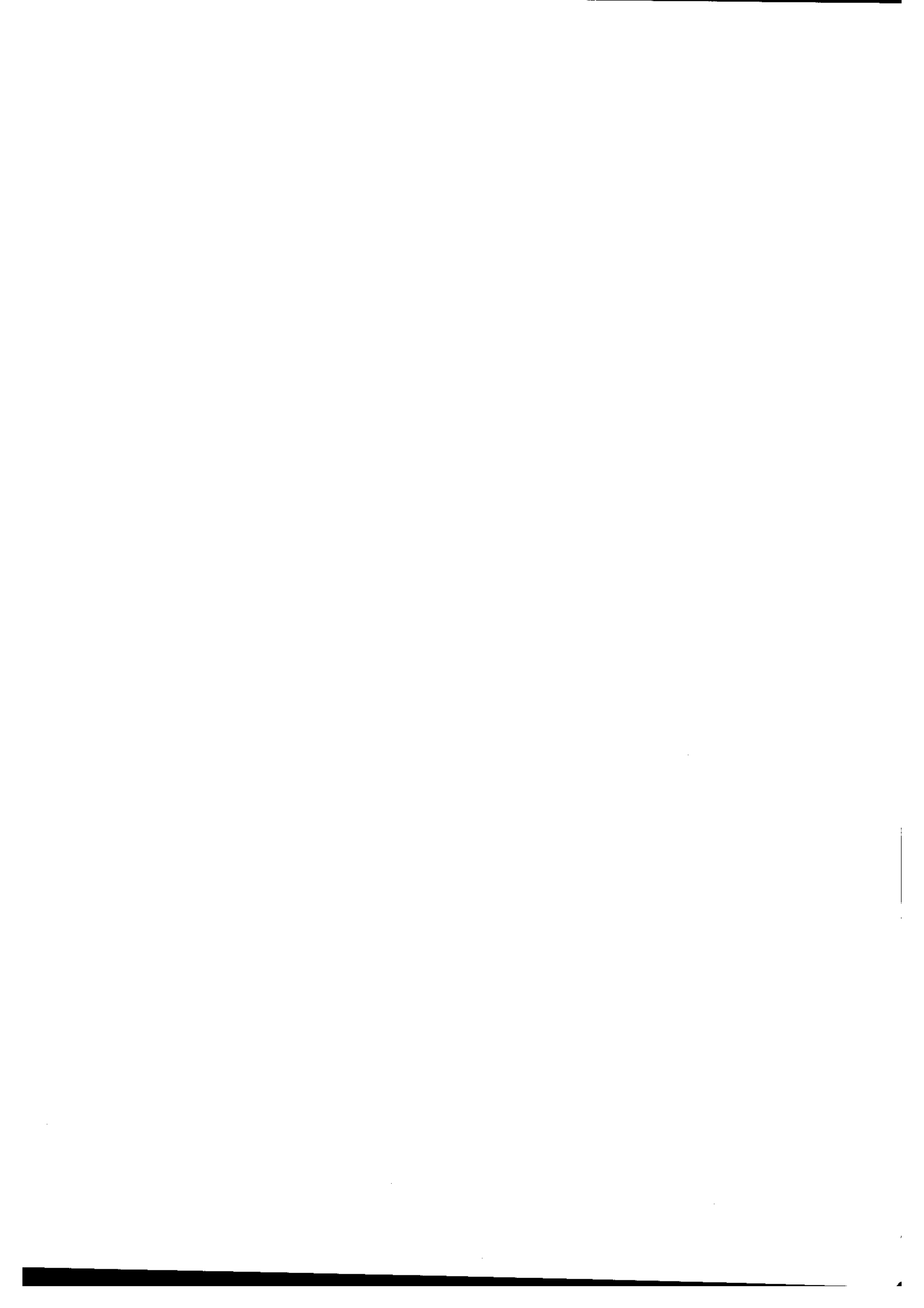
The purpose of this booklet is to launch the concept of "The Christian–Islamic Heritage" which I believe in, advocate and promote.

It was presented for the first time at the meeting organized by Harvard University and the Suzanne Mubarak Women's Peace Movement, on *Peace and Human Rights*. The enthusiasm and interest with which it was received, did not escape the keen mind and observing eyes of Ismail Serageldin, Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the new Library of Alexandria. Hence, he suggested its publication.

The paper highlights the fact that respecting the right of freedom to religious belief and respect of all religions, enhances peace and refutes the prevailing misconception that religion is a reason for a clash, especially between Christianity and Islam. It is an invitation to discover the forgotten or ignored Christian–Islamic Heritage.

I hope it can contribute, even a little, to easing tension and confrontation.

Leila Ibrahim Takla



THE CONCEPT OF CHRISTIAN–ISLAMIC HERITAGE

The respect of *human rights* is necessary to maintain peace. In the absence of peace, all human rights are violated. This is a simple equation which establishes the interaction between *peace* and *human rights.*

Indeed the respect of every human right is a prerequisite to peace and security.

However, current events highlight the need to consolidate a specific right on which I shall focus, that is the right to religious freedom and the respect of religious beliefs.

Today, insecurity and instability have many faces; military, economic, social, emotional and cultural.

Sources and methods of conflict have developed new expressions and motives. The tools of war, usually known and predicted, have become difficult to trace. Conflict is no longer a confrontation between two defined military forces. The enemy is invisible and unidentified. We do not know exactly who the enemy is, where to find him, and how to fight him. It could be anyone, anywhere.

In an illogical effort to identify "The Enemy" and relieve ourselves from the agony of fighting a ghost, we fell in the trap of theories advocating a clash of civilizations[1] and confrontation between religions; thus resorted to generalization and discrimination.

Events led to unjustified distrust of all "the *others*", whoever they might be, just because they are different. To some, the other became the "decadent materialistic unfair Christian west", to some it became the "cruel militant uncivilized Muslim terrorists".

That other is different in the way of life, in cultural values and religious beliefs. Variety, which enriches life, became a reason for rejection and a source of conflict.

Today more than ever, we need to gradually incorporate the right of being different and remaining equal. We need to gradually uproot discrimination by knowing about each other. Knowledge is a bliss that chases the phantom of ignorance. It washes away darkness and sparks enlightenment. One whole religion is based on the concept of "knowing". Siddara, son of King Ashoka,

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[1] Please see author's note on civilization (Annex 1).

became "Buddha" when he developed into "the one who knows".

Knowing each other is the way to mutual acceptance, to coexistence and to cooperation without discrimination.[2]

Of all the differences between people, religion seems to be the most sensitive one.

Religious means that which is Holy.
A call for war or violence cannot be Holy.
It is a revolt against religions.

Religion should not be a variable in the equation of evaluating a person, or in the process of decision-making. Yet, when we swallowed the concept of an inevitable clash between religions, activities started to have a religious explanation and justification. Every time we explain a conflict on the basis of religion, we are encouraging a trend we should be trying to eliminate.

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[2] Some people advocate and call for Tolerance. It is a good word but not my favorite. What we need is more than tolerance. Tolerance has a connotation of "putting up with something negative" people tolerate a headache, a tooth pain, (a nagging wife or a cruel husband). I do not just tolerate a Muslim, a Christian or a Jew. I accept them and respect their differences. What we need is not only tolerance but mutual acceptance and understanding that well lead to peaceful co-existence and cooperation.

When some terrorists, who happen to be Muslim, committed outrageous crimes, all Muslims became guilty, and because some Christians are unjust or inhuman in their political decisions, all Christians became "The Enemy".

Instead of realizing that *some* terrorists are Muslim, **Terrorism became Islam itself.** On the other hand, Christianity, not some Christians, become "rejected". These attitudes, which are spreading globally, constitute a serious violation of all human rights and are a threat to peace. Today more than ever, we need to scrutinize this Christian versus Muslim trend.

The two questions we face are:

- Should the war against terrorism be a war against Islam?
- Do the differences between Christianity and Islam justify that confrontation?

Terrorism has no boundaries, no nationality and no religion; also the good in the world does not have one specific nationality or religion.

There is nothing wrong with Islam as a religion, there is nothing wrong with Christianity as a religion

and there is nothing wrong with Judaism as a religion, but there is a great deal of wrong committed by Muslim fundamentalists, Christian fanatics and Jewish Zionists. Today we need to know not only the religions of others but our very own.

Only the truth can make us free of anger, of hate and rejection, and only then we shall see that this is not a clash between civilizations or religions but should be a struggle of all civilizations and religions, jointly, to free the world from terrorists of all types, terrorists who destroy civilization and abuse religions.

War should be against all terrorists regardless of the religion they claim.

Muslim terrorists did not commit their crimes because they are Muslim but in spite of being Muslim. The US troops are not bombing Iraq because they are Christian but in spite of being Christian.

The war in *Iraq* is not a religious confrontation. Some of the countries in "The Coalition" are Muslim, and the El Qaeda committed crimes in several Muslim and Arab countries. Christian churches were against invading and bombing Iraq.

Egypt suffered great human and economic losses at hands of Muslim terrorists who were harbored by the west.

All religions call for peace. "Peace be with you" is the blessing of Christ; "Grant us Peace" is the core of Christian Prayer and "Peace be on you" is the constant greeting of Islam.

Religion is not the cause of violence though it sometimes appears to be so.

In my opinion the war in *Ireland* was not a religious war. It was not about religion. They did not disagree about whether we say Hail Mary three times or ten times. They did not disagree about the words of the Holy Mass.

The English, who happened to be mainly Protestant, occupied Ireland. The people of Ireland are Catholic. The occupier, as usual, became the powerful and the rich. The occupied remained the less privileged and not well-treated.

The Catholic Irish fought the English Protestants for freedom, independence and equality. People fight for their freedom regardless of religious beliefs.

The conflict in *Palestine* is not a fight of Jews *vs.* Muslims. Many Christians died or were wounded and lost their homes by the guns of Jewish terrorists and by the tanks of the Israeli Government. Christian Holy Places were damaged or defamed. It is war between the occupier and the occupied. It is a fight between Israel—which is a Jewish state—against Palestinians, who are both Christian and Muslim and lived very well together for generations.

Even the so-called *Crusades* were not, in my opinion, religious wars but were induced by economic and political reasons. The European troops were not referred to by the Arabs as "crusaders", but were called the "Foreigners" الفرنجة and those invaders murdered about 80 Christian priests.

What Muslim terrorists commit is *not Jihad.* It is reported that Prophet Muhammad, in his late years said "The minor Jihad has ended and now starts the major Jihad". When asked what is the major Jihad he answered "The major Jihad is within oneself"; a sentence which means to control and refine ones desires and impulses.

A fanatic does not understand the religion of the other.
A terrorist does not understand even his own religion.

What we really need today is to know about each others cultures and religions. We do not know enough about the beliefs of "the others" yet we hasten to reject them and their beliefs.

Various researches have been conducted on the roots of religions and it is amazing to discover how close their roots are. The concept of the Judeo–Christian Heritage has already been established (in spite of the fact that Jews do not believe in Jesus Christ or his message on Earth). It is often said that this concept of Judeo–Christian Culture has been motivated by political, not religious reasons. Whether this occurred for religious reasons or political motives, it is best to try to avoid clashes.

Today the world should discover the existing, but ignored, "Christian–Islamic heritage". The similarities between Christianity and Islam are numerous, and more than between any other two religions. Let me refer to only a few.

- Christianity is based on *the acceptance of Christ*; Jesus Christ is highly revered by Muslims.
- Just as in the Bible, Jesus is referred to in the Quran as "The Word of God". The first sentence of the book of John is "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God".

The Quran says:

> *"Jesus, the son of Mary, the Apostle of God, is simply His Word and edict which He authoritatively proclaimed to Mary and a spirit that proceeded from Him".* (*The Women*, verse 171)
>
> إنما المسيح عيسي بن مريم رسول الله و كلمته ألقاها إلى مريم وروح منه .
>
> (سورة النساء، ١٧١)

The Holy Spirit is one of the Pillars of Christianity. A verse in "Al Baqarah/The Cow" states that

> *God gave Jesus knowledge and the Holy Spirit.* (*The Cow*, verse 87)
>
> وأتينا عيسى ابن مريم البينات وأيدناه بروح القدس .
>
> (سورة البقرة، ٨٧)

- According to the Quran, Jesus is the only Prophet, whose birth was a miracle.

- Muslims believe that Jesus "Spoke in the crib" as a newborn, they believe in the miracles he performed, and that he ascended to Heaven.
- They revere Virgin Mary, who is mentioned in the Quran more times than in the Bible. She is the only woman who has a chapter in her name *(Sura Mariam)*
- For Muslims, The Bible is a Holy Book revealed by God and not written by man.

A verse in "Al Hadid/The Iron" states

> *We sent Jesus, son of Mary, and We gave him the Bible.*[3]
> (*The Iron*, verse 27)
>
> وقفينا بعيسي ابن مريم وآتيناه الإنجيل . (سورة الحديد، ٢٧)

- Most Christians in the west were misled to believe that violence is part of Islamic creed. The truth is that Islamic creed consists of five articles of faith: belief in one God; in the angels; in the revealed books (including the Torah and the Bible); in the Prophets, and in the Day of Judgment.

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[3] The official certified translation of the Quranic verses that revere and respect the Bible and the Torah are cited in Annex 2.

- The five pillars, or obligations, of Islam are reciting the profession of faith; prayer; paying the *zakat* (money to charity); fasting; and pilgrimage to Mecca.

Are these really different from Christian creed and teachings?!

On the other hand, most Muslims were led to believe that Christianity is not a monotheistic religion; that Christians do not believe in one god, but three; a serious misunderstanding of the concept of the Holy Trinity.

The truth is that the first sentence in the confession of Christian faith is "*I believe in one God*". When asked what is the foremost of all teachings Jesus replied "It is that *God is one*".

For Christians, God the father sent his Holy Spirit to Mary and Jesus was born of that Holy Spirit. The three are a continuum. The three are the expression of one Holy Spirit and cannot be three.

Saying it is not one but different entities would be against monotheism. This is why Christians start their prayer by saying "in the name of The Father, the son and the Holy Spirit, One God, Amen".

باسم الأب والابن والروح القدس اله واحد، أمين.

Verses about the birth of Jesus in the Bible and in the Quran are remarkably close. The Book of Luke states "God sent the angel Gabriel to a virgin … The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her "Do not be afraid Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High … How will this be" Mary asked the angel "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God." (*Luke* 1:28).

The Quran's statement about the birth of Jesus is quite similar.

> *The Holy Quran states that God sent His Spirit to a virgin, Mary, and by that spirit and untouched by man, Jesus was begotten.*
>
> (*The Family of Imran*, 45–49)

> *"And for once did the angels say to Mary: O Mary here we relate to you a divine edict: God intimates to*

you the announcement of a happy event, the arrival of a male child the product of a word from Him, designated the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, who shall be distinguished here and hereafter and of those nearest to God" "he shall speak to people in his cradle in infancy and in manhood, and he shall be one of those whose deeds are imprinted with wisdom and piety."

What is decreed must be and be this so "she, Mary, said: how shall I have a son O God my Creator when no man has touched me? She was told: Thus does God Create what He will; when He decrees a thing He only says "Be" and it is".

"He shall teach him the Book of knowledge and wisdom and He shall teach him the Torah and the Gospel,"...

"And he shall be an Apostle to the Children of Israel conveying acts of miraculous nature serving to demonstrate his delegated divine power and authority to influence their conduct and their actions; he shall be instructed to say to them: "I have brought you an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. I shall create for you from clay the figure of a bird and inspirit it and there it shall be a living bird by God's command; I shall restore the sight of him who is congenitally blind and heal the leper

and with delegated divine authority shall I raise the dead by God's command. I shall also inform you of what you eat and of what you store in reserve in your homes. This should be enough divine evidence to bring you to acknowledge the truth of my mission if indeed your hearts have been impressed with the image of religious and spiritual virtues."

"إذ قالت الملائكة يا مريم إن الله يبشرك بكلمة منه اسمه المسيح عيسي ابن مريم وجيها في الدنيا والآخرة ومن المقربين ويكلم الناس في المهد وكهلا ومن الصالحين قالت ربي أني يكون لي ولد ولم يمسسني بشر قال كذلك الله يخلق ما يشاء إذا قضي أمراً فإنما يقول له كن فيكون ويعلمه الكتاب والحكمة والتوراة والإنجيل ورسولا إلي بني إسرائيل أني قد جئتكم بآية من ربكم أني أخلق لكم من الطين كهيئة الطير فأنفخ فيه فيكون طيرا بإذن الله وأبرئ الأكمة والأبرص وأحي الموتى بإذن الله وأنبئكم بما تأكلون وما تدخرون في بيوتكم إن في ذلك لآية لكم إن كنتم مؤمنين."

(آل عمران، ٤٥-٤٩)

Differences between Christianity and Islam do not justify animosity or clash.

Jesus said: "Those who are not against us are with us."

Muslims are not against Christianity and believe in Jesus, begotten by the Holy Spirit.

There are differences of course; but there are also differences between denominations of the same religion. Some denominations are closer, in some ways, to denominations of another religion than to those of its own.

The differences between Christianity and Islam do not justify animosity or clash. Those who believe in Jesus cannot be enemies of Christianity. Jesus said "those who are not against us are with us" and Muslims believe in Jesus; the Word of God, His message and His Holy Spirit.

What then is the problem? The problem is that we do not know enough about each other and what we do not know we cannot accept, and instantly reject.

Let us not blame civilizations or abuse religions. What is happening is rather a result of people's greed and ambitions, of the desire of some to oppress and of others to rebel and destroy. It is a conflict between what is bad in people and what is good in all religions.

It is also a clash between the have and the have-not; between the rich powerful on one hand and the poor and oppressed on the other, oppressed not only by other

powers but often by their own systems; between those who always want more and those who always live in want, in a world where what counts is what you have and not what you are.

It is always power, political economic motives and personal ambitions that are behind violence and aggression ... and it is always the innocent in all religions who suffer.

Above all, it is the lack of religious knowledge, and not religions, that cause rejection, conflict and violence. I am convinced that knowing about each others religions, understanding our own faith and adhering human rights related to respect of religions would enhance peace.

These are specifically:

- Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948;
- Article 18 of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, 1966;
- Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief, UN General Assembly, 1981;
- Other International and Regional Covenants, Resolutions and Declarations.

My conviction is not academic ... It is a result of practical experience. Living in Egypt where Christians and Muslims have lived together since the dawn of both religions, where the enlightened and the fanatic currents flow together, I became convinced that sound governmental and non-governmental, practices and policies can promote knowledge and acceptance.

- Today, Egyptians are proud of both their Coptic and Islamic heritages.
- The day Christ was born, Christmas, is an official holiday.
- New laws are being promulgated regarding the building of churches.
- The route of the Holy Family into Egypt is rediscovered and renewed, by a project financed by the Government.
- Non sectarian NGOs are promoting "Religious Brotherhood".
- The Suzanne Mubarak Peace Movement is looking into school curriculum.
- The National Council of Human Rights is monitoring possible cases of discrimination.

- In Old Cairo, the religious compound includes the oldest church in Africa (the Hanging Church); the first synagogue in Africa (Ben Ezra); and the first mosque in Africa (Amr ibn El-Aas). Today, the three Houses of Worship stand side-by-side in an awesome impressive silent dialogue between religions.

The property of the Coptic Church (*Waqf*) which was nationalized by the 1952 Revolution has now returned to the Church.

A very significant fact is that the Egyptian Penal Code[4] has several articles which incriminate the disdain, insult or lack of respect of all religions, their symbols, their traditions, their houses of worship and their clergy. These articles have been often evoked and the violators punished.

I hope other countries would follow suit.[5] Since some laws are promulgated to protect only one religion.[6]

4 See, Articles 98 and 160–161 of the Egyptian Penal Code in Annex 3.

5 A book by Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights includes the guidelines for review of legislation pertaining to religion or belief.

6 The Global Anti-Semitic Review Act, of 2004, issued by the 108 Congress of the USA. It is concerned with only one religion and one country. It incriminates anti-Semitic activities (which means Arabs can benefit from it since they are Semitic). Then it protects a country and does not allow criticism of its behavior. This constitutes a grave violation of Freedom of Expression (copy attached, Annex 4).

As a woman, as an advocate of human rights, and as a Christian I am very proud of the steps which Egypt, under President Mubarak, is taking towards equality, mutual understanding and acceptance.

Of course there are problems.

There will always be fanatics, and some are incurable, and it looks that terrorism, both by people and by governments, formal and informal, will remain with our world for some time.

This should not discourage us and we must continue to work diligently and together, towards dismantling that growing mountain of misunderstanding and rejection. This is, a good starting point, and can be a meaningful and successful contribution to peace.

> *Without justice there is no peace. Peace is justice. What we need today, more than ever, is "a culture of peace and justice".*

Before I conclude allow me to refer to two other rights relevant to peace.

One is the *Right to Justice.* As Pope J. Paul said "there is no Peace without Justice". He says "True peace is the fruit of justice, that moral virtue and legal guarantee

which ensures full respect for rights and responsibilities and the just distribution of benefits and burdens."

It is difficult to find words which are wiser or more expressive. Indeed, people who are oppressed, suppressed or occupied will eventually fight for their freedom and their dignity "Peace is Justice". To attain Peace we need to advocate a culture of Justice.

The other is *Women's Rights.* Women's contribution to development is significant and has become recognized. Empowering women is an investment in development, and thus leads to peace, to security and ensures respect of human dignity. Moreover, women are excellent agents for disseminating a culture of peace.

Today, dear colleagues, the world has a pressing ardent need for "a culture of peace and justice" based on the belief that

All countries are Important,
All People are Equal,
All Colors are Beautiful, and
All Religions are Great.
No one can accomplish that better than women.

Thank you.

ANNEXES



Annex 1

NOTE ABOUT CIVILIZATION

I do not think that what is happening is a clash of civilizations. Huntington and others sold that idea so well, that we became imprisoned within its bars, and took it as a "*fait accompli*", an indisputable reality. The fact is that civilizations do not clash and cannot clash. The word civilization reflects a positive meaning. A civilization is the result of a very long process of accumulation of knowledge and innovation .

Inherent, in the word itself, is the component of stability. It is a relatively new word. In 1772, Johnson refused to insert the word civilization in his dictionary. He preferred the older word "civility". This like "urbanity" reflects the contempt of the townsman for the rustic or barbarian. It is an invidious term, although in a way, justified by the fact that, only where cities have grown have people developed intricate civilizations. The arduous and dispersed tasks of the hunter, shepherd and peasant folks, cannot afford the leisure or the varied human contacts essential to the generation of new ideas and discoveries.

In other words, civilizations develop when people cease to live on hunting as nomads with no stability, and settle down in cities where relations develop and people have more time to think, study, invent and discover. Stability, not conflict, is the nature and essence of civilization.

Moreover, a civilization is not a separate identifiable tangible entity that clashes like an army, government or organization. It is the total sum of many variables. It is a combination of past and present, of acts and achievement, of beliefs and morals, it can incorporate several cultures. In short, it is a heritage and a "*modus vivandi*". The question then becomes who represents this, or that civilization, that clashes with the other!

Annex 2

QURANIC VERSES REFERRING TO THE BIBLE AND TORAH

(The English Translation of the Quranic verses are approved and certified by Al Azhar)

"والذين يؤمنون بما أنزل إليك وما أنزل من قبلك وبالآخرة هم يوقنون" (البقرة، ٤)

"who faithfully believe in all that has been revealed to you (O Muhammad)—Quran way of life religious and spiritual virtues and all that has been enjoined and they credit all that had been revealed to those who were sent before you: Torah, Gospel and the like and affirm with the eye of faith the certainty of the Hereafter.

(*The Cow,* verse 4)

"نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقا لما بين يديه وأنزل التوراة والإنجيل" (آل عمران، ٣)

He has revealed to you (O Muhammad) the Book. The Quran in truth and in agreement with reality the Quran which corroborates and authoritatively

validates the authentic Books which were revealed aforetime and in order of time did He reveal the Torah and the Gospel.

(*The Family of Imran*, verse 3)

"وقفينا علي آثرهم بعيسي ابن مريم مصدقا لما بين يديه من التوراة وآتيناه الإنجيل فيه هدي ونور ومصدقا لما بين يديه من التوراة وهدي وموعظة للمتقين × وليحكم أهل الإنجيل بما أنزل الله فيه ومن لم يحكم بما أنزل الله فأولئك هم الفاسقون"

(المائدة، ٤٦-٤٧)

Next we sent Jesus the son of Mary to succeed the Jewish prophets to corroborate faith in the Torah which was set before him and we graced him with the Bible that was fitted to contribute guidance to all truth and to impart illumination and enlightenment as possessed by the mind and to confirm the body of rules and the statutes which sere set forth in the Torah and to serve as the spirit of truth that guides to all truth and as an admonition to those who entertain the profound reverence dutiful to God". And just as it was mandatory that the Jews would use the Torah as the standard of judgment so would the Christians they were commanded to use the Bible as the canon law by which to judge matters disputes and the like. We emphasized that he who does not use the standard of judgment as revealed by God shall be wrongful of actions and such like persons are the wicked.

(*The Table*, verses 46–47)

قل يا أهل الكتاب لستم على شيء حتى تقيموا التوراة والإنجيل
وما أنزل إليكم من ربكم . (المائدة، ٦٨)

Say to them: O you people of the Book, you bend on a system of faith which does not have the standing upon the vantage ground of truth until you abide by the precepts of the Torah and the Bible and all that has been sent down to you from God.

(*The Table*, verse 68)

"والذي أوحينا إليك من الكتاب هو الحق مصدقا لما بين يديه
إن الله بعباده لخبير بصير" (فاطر، ٣١)

"And rest assured (O Muhammad) that all we inspire to you of the Book—the Quran—is indeed the truth personified. It corroborates and confirms what had preceded of divine Books and Scriptures. He—God—is the Omniscient, the Omnipresent Whose constant vigilance is extended to all His creatures." (*The Creator*, verse 31)

"ولقد كتبنا في الزبور من بعد الذكر أن الأرض يرثها عبادي
الصالحين" (الأنبياء، ١٠٥)

"And we decreed and reduced to writing in the Psalms what is in harmony with the text in Torah (or in the archetypal Book) that the earth shall be inherited by My devout servants who imprint their deeds with wisdom and piety and their hearts with the image of religious and spiritual virtues."

(*The Prophets*, verse 105)

"ثم قفينا علي آثارهم برسلنا وقفينا بعيسي ابن مريم وآتيناه الإنجيل وجعلنا في قلوب الذين اتبعوه رأفة ورحمة ورهبانية ابتدعوها ما كتبناها عليهم إلا ابتغاء رضوان الله فما رعوها حق رعايتها فآتينا الذين أمنوا منهم أجرهم و كثير منهم"

(الحديد، ٢٧)

"Then in sequence We sent after them others of Our Apostles from the same lineal descent and in order of succession We sent Jesus, son of Mary and We gave him the Bible and we impressed the hearts of those who followed him and believed in him with kindness and mercy and monasticism a system of their contrivance which they had introduced and which We never imposed on them. They were expected to please God with the profound reverence dutiful to Him and with the deeds which reflect wisdom and piety and with striving in His cause to attain His purpose. Yet when We made it – Monasticism – come to pass they never regarded the principle with close attention nor did they foster it as they should. And so we gave those of them whose hearts were impressed with the image of religious and spiritual virtues and their deeds with wisdom and piety the reward they merited and many among them were indeed wicked."

(*The Iron*, verse 27)

Annex 3

ARTICLES OF THE EGYPTIAN PENAL CODE

مادة ٩٨

يعاقب بالحبس مدة لا تقل عن ستة أشهر ولا تجاوز خمس سنوات أو بغرامة لا تقل عن خمسمائة جنيه ولا تجاوز ألف جنيه كل من استغل الدين في الترويج أو التحبيذ بالقول أو بالكتابة أو بأية وسيلة أخرى لأفكار متطرفة بقصد إثارة الفتنة أو تحقير أو ازدراء أحد الأديان السماوية أو الطوائف المنتمية إليها أو الإضرار بالوحدة الوطنية أو السلم الاجتماعي.

ARTICLE 98

Any person who exploits religion in order to promote or advocate extremist ideologies by word of mouth, in writing or in any other manner with a view to stirring up sedition, disparaging or belittling any divinely-revealed religion or its adherents, or prejudicing national unity or social harmony shall be liable to a penalty of imprisonment for a period of not less than six months and not more than five years or a fine not less than LE 500 and not more than LE 1000.

مادة ١٦٠

يعاقب بالحبس وبغرامة لا تقل عن مائة جنية ولا تزيد علي خمسمائة جنيه أو بإحدى هاتين العقوبتين:

أولا: كل من شوش علي إقامة شعائر ملة أو احتفال ديني خاص بها أو عطلها بالعنف أو التهديد.

ثانيا: كل من خرب أو كسر أو أتلف أو دنس مباني معدة لإقامة شعائر دين أو رموزا أو أشياء أخرى لها حرمة عند أبناء ملة أو فريق من الناس.

ثالثا: كل من انتهك حرمة القبور أو الجبانات أو دنسها.

وتكون العقوبة السجن الذي لا تزيد مدته علي خمسة سنوات إذا ارتكبت أي من الجرائم المنصوص عليها تنفيذا لغرض إرهابي.

Article 160

The following offences are punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine not less than LE 100 and not more than LE 500:

1. The use of violence or threats to disrupt or interrupt the religious observances or celebrations of any community;
2. The destruction, damage or desecration of premises dedicated to the practice of religious rites, or of symbols or other articles venerated by the members of a religious community or group of people;

3. The violation or desecration of graves or cemeteries.

The penalty of imprisonment shall be for a period of not more than 5 years if any of the mentioned offences are committed for the purpose of terrorism.

مادة ١٦١

يعاقب بتلك العقوبات علي كل تعد يقع بإحدى الطرق المبينة بالمادة ١٧١ علي أحد الأديان التي تؤدى شعائرها علنا ويقع تحت أحكام هذه المادة:

أولا: طبع أو نشر كتاب مقدس في نظر أهل دين من الأديان التي تؤدى شعائرها علنا إذا حرف عمدا نص هذا الكتاب تحريفا يغير من معناه.

ثانيا: تقليد احتفال ديني في مكان عمومي أو مجتمع عمومي بقصد السخرية به أو ليتفرج عليه الحضور.

Article 161

It is a punishable misdemeanor, if an offence is committed against a publicly practiced religion through one of the modes mentioned in Article 171, and is hereby subject to these penalties:

1. Printing or publishing distorted versions of a holy book of any publicly practiced religion, provided the

text is intentionally deflected in a manner that alters its meaning;

2. Mimicking a religious celebration in a public place or community with a view to ridiculing it, or to be watched by an audience.

Annex 4

GLOBAL ANTI-SEMITISM REVIEW ACT OF 2004

ONE-HUNDRED-EIGHTH CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AT THE SECOND SESSION

BEGUN AND HELD AT THE CITY OF WASHINGTON ON TUESDAY, THE TWENTIETH DAY OF JANUARY, TWO-THOUSAND-AND-FOUR

AN ACT

To require a report on acts of anti-Semitism around the world.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE

This Act may be cited as the "Global Anti-Semitism Review Act of 2004".

SECTION 2. FINDINGS

Congress makes the following findings:

1) Acts of anti-Semitism in countries throughout the world, including some of the world's strongest democracies, have increased significantly in frequency and scope over the last several years.

2) During the last 3 months of 2003 and the first 3 months of 2004, there were numerous instances of anti-Semitic violence around the world, including the following incidents:

   A) In Putrajaya, Malaysia, on October 16, 2003, former Prime Minister Mahatir Mohammad told the 57 national leaders assembled for the Organization of the Islamic Conference that Jews "rule the world by proxy", and called for a "final victory" by the world's 1.3 billion Muslims, who, he said, "cannot be defeated by a few million Jews."

   B) In Istanbul, Turkey, on November 15, 2003, simultaneous car bombs exploded outside two synagogues filled with worshippers, killing 24 people and wounding more than 250 people.

C) In Australia on January 5, 2004, poison was used to ignite, and burn anti-Semitic slogans into, the lawns of the Parliament House in the state of Tasmania.

D) In St. Petersburg, Russia, on February 15, 2004, vandals desecrated approximately 50 gravestones in a Jewish cemetery, painting the stones with swastikas and anti-Semitic graffiti.

E) In Toronto, Canada, over the weekend of March 19 through March 21, 2004, vandals attacked a Jewish school, a Jewish cemetery, and area synagogues, painting swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans on the walls of a synagogue and on residential property in a nearby, predominantly Jewish, neighborhood.

F) In Toulon, France, on March 23, 2004, a Jewish synagogue and community center were set on fire.

3) Anti-Semitism in old and new forms is also increasingly emanating from the Arab and Muslim world on a sustained basis, including through books published by government-owned publishing houses in Egypt and other Arab countries.

4) In November 2002, state-run television in Egypt broadcast the anti-Semitic series entitled "Horseman Without a Horse", which is based upon the fictitious conspiracy theory known as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. The Protocols have been used throughout the last century by despots such as Adolf Hitler to justify violence against Jews.

5) In November 2003, Arab television featured an anti-Semitic series, entitled "Ash-Shatat" (or "The Diaspora"), which depicts Jewish people hatching a plot for Jewish control of the world.

6) The sharp rise in anti-Semitic violence has caused international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to elevate, and bring renewed focus to, the issue, including the convening by the OSCE in June 2003 of a conference in Vienna dedicated solely to the issue of anti-Semitism.

7) The OSCE convened a conference again on 28–29 April 2004, in Berlin, to address the problem of anti-Semitism with the United States delegation led by former Mayor of New York City, Ed Koch.

8) The United States Government has strongly supported efforts to address anti-Semitism through bilateral relationships and interaction with international organizations such as the OSCE, the European Union, and the United Nations.

9) Congress has consistently supported efforts to address the rise in anti-Semitic violence. During the 107th Congress, both the Senate and the House of Representatives passed resolutions expressing strong concern with the sharp escalation of anti-Semitic violence in Europe and calling on the Department of State to thoroughly document the phenomenon.

10) Anti-Semitism has at times taken the form of vilification of Zionism, the Jewish national movement, and incitement against Israel.

SECTION 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS

It is the sense of Congress that:

1) The United States Government should continue to strongly support efforts to combat anti-Semitism worldwide through bilateral Relationships and interaction with international organizations such as the OSCE, the European Union, and the United Nations; and

2) the Department of State should thoroughly document acts of anti-Semitism that occur around the world.

SECTION 4. REPORTS

Not later than November 15, 2004, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives a one-time report on acts of anti-Semitism around the world, including a description of-

1) acts of physical violence against, or harassment of, Jewish people, and acts of violence against, or vandalism of, Jewish community institutions, such as schools, synagogues, or cemeteries, that occurred in each country;

2) the responses of the governments of those countries to such actions;

3) the actions taken by such governments to enact and enforce laws relating to the protection of the right to religious freedom of Jewish people;

4) the efforts by such governments to promote anti-bias and tolerance education; and

5) instances of propaganda in government and non-government media that attempt to justify or promote racial hatred or incite acts of violence against Jewish people.

SECTION 5. AUTHORIZATION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE TO MONITOR AND COMBAT ANTI-SEMITISM

The State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 is amended by adding after section 58 (22 U.S.C. 2730) the following new section:

SECTION 59. MONITORING AND COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM

a) Office To Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism.-
   1) Establishment of office.--The Secretary shall establish within the Department of State an Office to Monitor and Combat anti-Semitism (in this section referred to as the 'Office').
   2) Head of office.--
      A) Special envoy for monitoring and combating anti-Semitism.- The head of the Office shall be the Special Envoy for Monitoring and Combating anti-Semitism (in this section referred to as the "Special Envoy").

B) Appointment of head of office.--The Secretary shall appoint the Special Envoy. If the Secretary determines that such is appropriate, the Secretary may appoint the Special Envoy from among officers and employees of the Department. The Secretary may allow such officer or employee to retain the position (and the responsibilities associated with such position) held by such officer or employee prior to the appointment of such officer or employee to the position of Special Envoy under this paragraph.

b) Purpose of Office.--Upon establishment, the Office shall assume the primary responsibility for--

1) monitoring and combating acts of anti-Semitism and anti- Semitic incitement that occur in foreign countries;

2) coordinating and assisting in the preparation of that portion of the report required by sections 116(d) (7) and 502B (b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d) (7) and 2304 (b)) relating to an assessment and description of the nature and extent of acts of anti-Semitism and

anti-Semitic incitement for inclusion in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices; and

3) coordinating and assisting in the preparation of that portion of the report required by section 102 (b) (1) (A) (iv) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6412 (b) (1) (A) (iv)) relating to an assessment and description of the nature and extent of acts of anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic incitement for inclusion in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom.

c) Consultations.--The Special Envoy shall consult with domestic and international nongovernmental organizations and multilateral organizations and institutions, as the Special Envoy considers appropriate to fulfill the purposes of this section.".

SECTION 6. INCLUSION IN DEPARTMENT OF STATE ANNUAL REPORTS OF INFORMATION CONCERNING ACTS OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

a) Inclusion in Country Reports on Human Rights Practices.—The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151 et seq.) is amended-

1) in section 116(d) (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d))--
   A) by redesignating paragraphs (8), (9), and (10), as paragraphs (9), and (11), respectively; and
   B) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph 8 wherever applicable, a description of the nature and extent of acts of anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic incitement that occur during the preceding year, including descriptions of—
      A) acts of physical violence against, or harassment of Jewish people, and acts of violence against, or vandalism of Jewish community institutions, including schools, synagogues, and cemeteries;
      B) instances of propaganda in government and non-government media that attempt to justify or promote racial hatred or incite acts of violence against Jewish people;
      C) the actions, if any, taken by the government of the country to respond to such violence and attacks or to eliminate such propaganda or incitement;
      D) the actions taken by such government to enact and enforce laws relating to the

protection of the right to religious freedom of Jewish people; and

E) the efforts of such government to promote anti-bias and tolerance education;"; and (2) after the fourth sentence of section 502B (b) (22 U.S.C. 2304 (b)), by inserting the following new sentence: Wherever applicable, a description of the nature and extent of acts of anti- Semitism and anti-Semitic incitement that occur, including the descriptions of such acts required under section 116 (d) (8).".

b) Inclusion in Annual Report on International Religious Freedom.--Section 102 (b) (1) (A) of the International Religious Freedom

Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6412(b)(1)(A)) is amended—

1) in clause (ii), by striking "and" at the end;
2) in clause (iii), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and
3) by adding after clause (iii) the following new clause: (iv) wherever applicable, an assessment and description of the nature and extent of acts of anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic incitement that

occur in that country during the preceding year, including:

I) acts of physical violence against, or harassment of, Jewish people, acts of violence against, or vandalism of, Jewish community institutions, and instances of propaganda in government and nongovernment media that incite such acts; and

II) the actions taken by the government of that country to respond to such violence and attacks or to eliminate such propaganda or incitement, to enact and enforce laws relating to the protection of the right to religious freedom of Jewish people, and to promote anti-bias and tolerance education.".

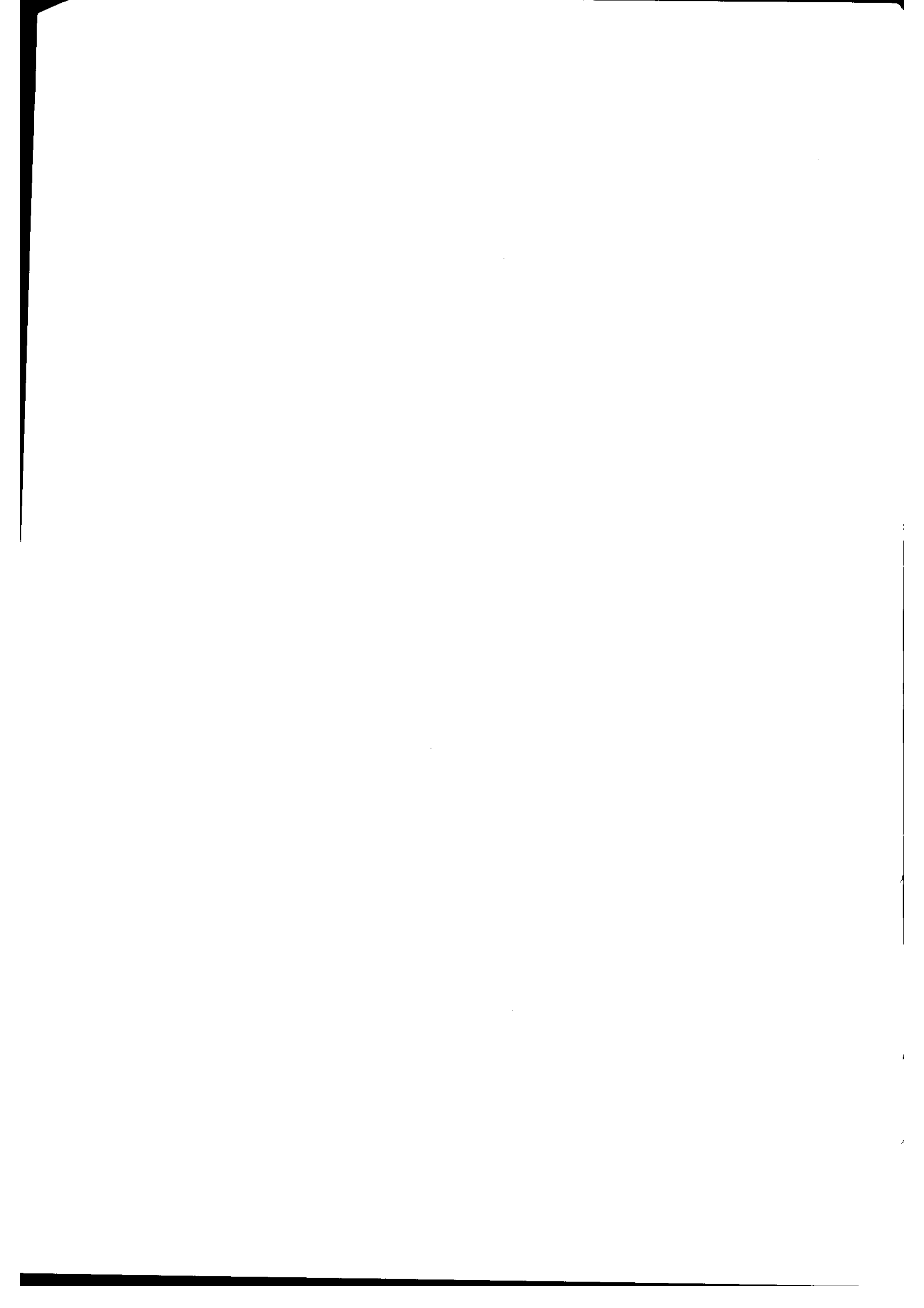
c) Effective Date of Inclusions.--The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall apply beginning with the first report under sections 116 (d) and 502B (b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n (d) and 2304 (b)) and section 102 (b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22

U.S.C. 6312 (b)) submitted more than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate.

End



BIOGRAPHY

Prof. Dr. Leila Ibrahim Takla received, with honors, her LL.B from Faculty of Law, Cairo University; Masters degree, University of Southern California, Los Angles, and PhD from New York University.

She is a Professor of Law and Management and a Senior Partner in "International Legal Consultant" Law Firm.

For the process of privatization, she was member of the Holding Company for Medical Chemical and Pharmaceutical Materials and Equipments.

Dr. Takla was the First Egyptian elected to chair a Parliamentary Committee "The Foreign Relations Committee" in The Egyptian Parliament, the first Arab Woman elected to the Executive Committee of the Union of the Worlds Parliaments and the First Woman in the World elected President of a meeting of the Worlds Parliaments.

She is Founder and Chair of the National Association for Protection of Environment, and of the Egyptian Federation of Women Lawyers; Vice-Chairman of the

Egyptian Committee to Preserve National Heritage and Chair of Egypt–Finland Friendship Association.

She is also Member of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Board of Trustees; the Board of Trustees of the Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement; the Executive Committee of National Council of Women; the Board of the National Council of Human Rights where she chairs the International Affairs Committee; the Egyptian Council of Foreign Relation; the Supreme Council of Culture; Friends of the Bible Society; Light and Hope Foundation (For visually impaired girls). She is also member of the World Commission on Culture and Development which produced the report "Our Creative Diversity" and a member of International Committee to protect intangible heritage and was elected three terms, President of the Board of Trustees of UN Technical Cooperation Programs (V.F.T.C.P)

She was asked to be an advisor to Carter Foundation Global 2000 (Atlanta), the Arab American Institute (USA); a Fellow at Equip Jack Cousteau (France); founder of First African Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women (Washington).

Her publications include: *Principles of Management*; *The Six Hour War*; *The Ombudsman*; *Family Courts*; *National Institutions of Human Rights*; *Why Women? And Why Now?* She has several published papers and reports, and has a weekly article in *Al-Ahram* newspaper.